

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 are all the claims pending in the application.

In the Amendment filed October 26, 2005, applicants distinguished over Provino by pointing out to the examiner that Provino does not teach or suggest a user connecting to another communications device that is outside of a VPN (to which the user is already connected) and using an identifier of the connected-to VPN as a logical channel identifier to facilitate sending messages to and receiving messages from the communications device. In paragraph 2 at page 2 of the Office action mailed January 26, 2006, the examiner acknowledges this argument but then, without ever responding to it on the merits, simply dismisses it on the grounds that the features on which applicant relies are not recited in the rejected claims. The examiner appears to have overlooked the language in claim 1 which for clarity is reproduced below with bold-face added to illustrate where the feature relied on for patentability is recited explicitly in claim 1:

1. A method for **enabling a user** registered in an Network Access Server as already connected to a host Virtual Private Network **to communicate with at least one communication device outside of said host Virtual Private Network**, said Network Access Server having access over a data communication network to said communication device and to a plurality of Virtual Private Networks including said host Virtual Private Network, wherein said method comprises:

detecting a message being sent from said user to said communication device while said user is currently connected to said host Virtual Private Network; and

directing said message to a logical channel between said Network Access Server and said communication device, wherein **said logical channel has, as a logical channel identifier, an identifier of said host Virtual Private Network to which said user is currently connected.**

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The bold-faced language describes subject matter neither shown nor suggested in Provino. Essentially the same language is found in claims 8-10. All claims patentably distinguish over the prior art due to the failure of the prior art to teach this claimed subject matter.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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